



**National Policy Dialogue on  
Integrated Water Resources Management Planning  
in the Republic of Lebanon**



**Seminar on the  
Current Outcomes of MED EUWI Activities in Lebanon  
& Planning of Future Steps**

**24 April 2009  
Beirut, Hotel Monroe**

**Concept Note**

**Objectives of the MED EUWI Seminar**

The Seminar aims to discuss with relevant water stakeholders the outcomes up to now of the activities in Lebanon of the Mediterranean Component of the EU Water Initiative (MED EUWI) and to plan together the follow-up steps that can contribute to an Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) process in the country, including through the elaboration of National IWRM Plan.

**Possible steps towards a National IWRM Plan in Lebanon**

Lebanon faces significant challenges in meeting the country's water demand on quantity and quality. Integrated Water Resources Management is been acknowledged as central for the sustainable water use, especially as forecasts suggest that Lebanon will encounter conditions of water scarcity by the year 2020 and also due to the fact that the country shares water bodies with its neighboring countries. Unsustainable water management practices, environmental risks and water governance shortcomings are among the key challenges to be met.

*IWRM is a process which promotes the co-ordinated development and management of water, land and related resources, in order to maximize the resultant economic and social welfare in an equitable manner without compromising the sustainability of vital ecosystems.*

In view of tackling water challenges following this new, integrated approach, the Lebanese authorities have already embarked upon a set of undertakings:

- a water sector reform process started in the year 2000 and including a revisit of the legal framework (law 221, 241 and 337 as well as a number of bylaws that were published in October 2005) and new institutional settings (restructuring of the Ministry responsible for Water Resources and condensing the 21 Regional Water Authorities/ Utilities in 4 Regional Water Establishments in the year 2002.
- the preparation by the Lebanese Ministry of Energy and Water, General Directorate of Hydraulic and Electric Resources (GDHER) of a National Decennial Strategic Plan for the Water Sector with a horizon up to 2009 (which has been renewed for 2008-2018). The Plan, promulgated as a law Program clearly acknowledges the need for a holistic approach, includes elements of an IWRM Plan and calls for consideration of water resources within a complete policy and planning cycle.
- the elaboration of a Water Code (as the result of a cooperation program between the Lebanese and the French governments) to help the MEW in its institutional support of a water governance framework and its technical approach for IWRM implementation.

Based on the new vision on water resources management following the requirements of IWRM and including, among others, a shift towards watershed management, the key reforms identified since 2005 by the Lebanese Government in view of restructuring the water sector include:

- Updating the 10 year strategic plan, endorsed by the Lebanese Government and the Lebanese Parliament, and preparing an integrated Water Sector strategy with a clear vision under the concept of the Law 221, its amendment and the bylaws published in October 2005;
- Preparing a National Water Master Plan and approving the Water Code;
- Improving the water sector governance by ensuring that all the necessary tools are put in place;
- Strengthening the capacities of the MEW and RWAs in order to enable them to carry out the tasks entrusted to them in an efficient and optimal way;
- Ensuring that Operation & Maintenance (O&M) of the water supply and sanitation services are contracted out to private operators and that the O&M of the small and medium scale irrigation schemes are gradually transferred to Water Users' Associations;
- Adopting a tariff structure that would be based on costs and volumetric consumption, with respect to social equity principles regarding the disadvantaged population;
- Preparing a short and medium term investment plan for the water sector taking into account the priorities and available funds.

It is in this framework that MED EUWI activities have been planned and are being implemented in Lebanon in cooperation with the MEW-DGHER.

### **MED EUWI activities in Lebanon**

MED EUWI constitutes an integral part and one of the geographic Components of the global EUWI (with Components also in Africa, Central Asia and Latin America). It represents a strategic partnership among all related stakeholders (national, regional and international) in the Mediterranean region, aiming at contributing to the implementation of the water-related Millennium Development Goals and the Johannesburg Summit Targets. MED EUWI implements targeted activities at the Mediterranean and national levels.

MED EUWI is led by the government of Greece with the support of the European Commission. All donor and implementing institutions at the regional and country levels are invited to join the endeavor according to their interest and expertise. The MED EUWI Secretariat within the Global Water Partnership-Mediterranean provides technical support and day-by-day running. The Euro-Mediterranean Water Directors Forum, serving as institutional support of the implementation of MED EUWI, provides advice and guidance on the MED EUWI further development and implementation.

### ***Review of the 10 years Strategic Plan for Water***

The main objective of the running Phase I of the MED EUWI activities in Lebanon, as endorsed by the Lebanese Government at the highest level in 2007, is to assist the government in reviewing the national 10 year Strategic Plan for Water (2000-2009) and, based on the key reforms needs identified by the Lebanese Government (see above), to launch and advance the process of complementing the Strategy with a National Integrated Water Resources Management Plan (to be fully elaborated in a Phase II of MED EUWI activities).

Key elements for reviewing the 10 year Strategic Plan (Plan) for Water include:

- Brief analysis of current needs and trends (up to 2020) of the water supply sector in Lebanon, with an emphasis on demand management for domestic, irrigation and industrial uses as well as on non-conventional water resources (eg. wastewater reuse, desalination) and techniques (eg. recharging of aquifers). The analysis was built on national targets, including targets for food security and the consequent increase of irrigated land.
- Analysis of the technical projects included in the Plan, justification with current needs and elaboration of policy recommendations.
- Consolidation of the Plan with the provisions of the Law 221, including the evolution of the Water Establishments with regard to Public Private Partnerships.
- Development of an awareness component in the Plan focusing on enhancing water demand management and non-conventional water resources.
- Development of a capacity building component to assist implementation of the Plan.
- Development of policy recommendations for adaptation to climate change impacts.

The results of this Review Study will be presented during the Seminar and discussed with the relevant water stakeholders. A first public presentation of and debate on the results of the Review Study was made on 6 February 2009 during the 2<sup>nd</sup> Beirut Water Week.

The presentation will be articulated in 5 short sessions providing an insight on the main issues that have been studied:

- 1- Assessment and management of water resources, particularly with regard to prospects of climate change
- 2- Domestic and industrial water needs and management
- 3- Sanitation needs and management
- 4- Irrigation needs and management
- 5- Organisation of institutions and human resources

### ***Promoting dialogue and participation in the Lebanese water sector***

Another central objective of current MED EUWI activities is to create a platform for dialogue and cooperation among the Lebanese stakeholders that are involved in water resources management. To this respect the formulation and operation of a high level 'Task Force' (TF) and an advisory 'Multi-Stakeholder Forum (MStF)' for consultation are advancing.

The present Seminar is also part of the efforts applied to improve consultation with and consensus-building among Lebanese water stakeholders so that they can be more effectively involved in the process hopefully leading to a National IWRM Plan in Lebanon.

### ***Next steps***

A special session (in the afternoon) will be dedicated to discuss in more details the draft list of recommendations outlined in the framework of the MED EUWI Review Study of the ongoing Strategy towards strengthening the capacities of the Lebanese water sector. These are provided in the Annex. The draft list of recommendations is not exhaustive and is to a certain extent informed by a first feedback received up to now through the stakeholders consultation.

With the contribution of all participants in the Seminar, we hope to be able to select among the suggested recommendations those that could be further developed in the future with the assistance of MED EUWI and other processes in the country. As a follow up, we expect to set-up a limited number of Working Groups involving different water stakeholders that will deal with one recommendation (or with a limited number of recommendations that can be grouped under the same heading, e.g. range of recommendations related to institutional settings, irrigation and agronomy).

## ANNEX

### SUGGESTED RECOMMENDATIONS PROVIDING ORIENTATION OF FUTURE WORK

#### D R A F T

##### **1. Support in implementing the various elements of the «Water Code»**

- A. Support the launching of a «National Water Council»
- B. Introduction of «awareness/information» sessions for parliamentary members of the Water Committee of the Parliament
- C. Preparations (legislative, institutional, etc) for the establishment of a «Water Police»

##### **2. Support for enhancing structuring and functional reinforcement of the water sector**

- A. Further clarify the definition of competences and responsibilities between institutions
- B. Raising civil servants' awareness and capacity about provisions, applications and effects of Water Law «n°221/2000»
- C. Adjusting the «Water Authorities' Regulations » to fully conform with Water Law «n°221/2000»
- D. Redefining the «Sanitation Strategy»
- E. Definition of competences and responsibilities in terms of non-collective sanitation (NCS)
- F. Investigation of the possibility of setting up an «incentive fund» for the development of NCS
- G. Support defining an industrial sanitation policy
- H. Debate on the alternatives for national measures to control urban development in relation to water and sanitation

##### **3. Support to reinforcing capacities of the Ministry of Energy and Water**

- A. Support redefining the MEW organization and settings according to the competences and responsibilities resulting from Water Law n°221/2000 / the 'Water Code' / the IWRM approach
- B. Reinforce consistency with the sanitation-related competences that were transferred from the local authorities to the RPWA
- C. Capacity reinforcement for the GDHER in terms of «resource knowledge and monitoring»
- D. Training in the use of tools for understanding and monitoring the resource
- E. Support in setting up and capacitating a Management Support Unit within the GDHER for «river basin planning»
- F. Management training for the GDHER in «sustainable water management contracting»
- G. GDHER awareness campaign and consultation of the potentials and constraints of promoting a «groundwater recharge» strategy and action plan
- H. Support for the GDHER in advancing the water resources protection policy in collaboration with competent authorities
- I. Training the GDHER in the development and implementation of «sustainable dams management plans»

##### **4. Support for Regional Public Water Authorities' capacities reinforcement**

- A. Reinforcement of RPWA capacities concerning «surveillance and rehabilitation» of drinking water distribution networks
- B. Training for RPWAs in developing and implementing «Integrated River Basin Management Plans»
- C. Training RPWAs in developing «human resources management plan» at the river basin level
- D. Raising capacity of RPWAs towards «cost recovery»

- E. Support in calculating «sanitation costs» (domestic sanitation /Industrial sanitation / Non-Collective sanitation)
- F. Support in setting up a «Non Collective Sanitation facility» and related training
- G. Support in setting up a database of "industrial water data"
- H. Support in defining a territorial "zoning" system in view to develop NCS

**5. Support towards sustainable water management by the agricultural sector**

- A. Support to the Ministry of Agriculture in designing and implementing a strategy for sustainable irrigation systems with lower water consumption
- B. Supporting farmers in the organisation of an «agricultural water users association»
- C. Awareness campaigns for farmers about the necessity to diversify cultivations and shift towards less water demanding cultivations
- D. Training and technical support for the water users associations

**6. Support for the training of targeted out-of-the-box actors involved in the development of the water sector**

- A. Support to set up a policy of « re-evaluating / developing » industrial zones
- B. Training « Architects and engineers » in the features of NCS

**7. «Informing / raising awareness» of different types of users**

- A. Awareness Campaigns for consumers on «sustainable water use»
- B. Awareness campaigns aimed at industrialists explaining the need for industrial sanitation
- C. Awareness campaigns in hospitals about the need for a sanitation system
- D. Awareness campaigns towards local authorities about the need to promote and accompany the development of NCS
- E. Awareness campaigns for farmers about environmental and sanitary consequences of using fertilisers and phytosanitary products
- F. Awareness campaigns for farmers about the consequences of climate change
- G. Awareness campaigns for farmers about the benefits and constraints of reusing «treated» wastewater for irrigation